



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner

Peter Mason  
Deputy Commissioner

Date: March 11, 2022

Subject: DDS Leadership Announcements effective April 1<sup>st</sup>

Dear DDS Stakeholders,

You've heard me promise several times recently that we would be able to share with you some of our plans to manage the retirement surge soon. I am so pleased to be able to share some of these plans with you now.

Among the many retirees anticipated this month, and closest to my everyday work, we will be saying farewell to our Deputy Commissioner, Peter Mason. Although he'll only be gone for a few weeks, he will be returning not as Deputy, but as the project director for our recently approved ARPA reinvestment plan. When I asked Peter to become my deputy, I knew many of his strengths and how they might mesh with my skills, strengths, and weaknesses. I also had in mind that we would spend our time working on a list of things I wanted to accomplish in my time here. I had no idea then, that we would spend much of our time together managing, with much support, a historic pandemic. While some of the other stuff did not always get the attention we had hoped for, I could not have had a better partner for the hand we were dealt. I will miss him very much by my side. I wish him nothing but joy in his retirement.

Upon Peter's departure, I am proud to name **Elisa Velardo** to be the next **DDS Deputy Commissioner**, effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. Elisa has served as Regional Director in the North Region since 2015, where she has overseen the full range of DDS functions. In addition, she has continued to represent the agency in statewide and national forums. Prior to joining DDS, Elisa held leadership roles in human services for over 25 years, spanning areas including family support services, vocational and employment service delivery, residential services, and community-based outreach for adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities, as well as psychiatric disabilities. We were lucky to attract her to DDS back in 2015, and luckier still that she'll be stepping up to help lead the agency in the months and years to come.

This will, of course, leave a hole in North Region leadership – and on that note, I am equally proud to name **Stacie Silva-Gordon** to be the next **Regional Director, North Region**, effective April 1st. Stacie has been with DDS for over 20 years, most recently serving as the Private ARD in the North Region since 2017. Before that, Stacie held positions across a number of areas and regions of DDS, including as a DSW, Case Manager,

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and Resource Administrator. She brings a calm and steady presence to the work she does and has always carried a huge load for the North Region. Her leadership will be instrumental in ensuring the continuity needed to manage the many transitions ahead.

Stay safe and thank you for all that you do!

Sincerely,

**Jordan A. Scheff**  
Commissioner  
Department of Developmental Services